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JAN 13 '55

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

PARTICIPANTS: Messrs. Julius Holmes of State Department,
Frank E. Wisner, Kermit Roosevelt, (C) (J)
C of CIA

SUBJECT : Briefing of Mr. Holmes on CIA Views Concerning
Albania

1. On 29 December 1954 in Mr. Wisner's office, the above-mentioned participants met to discuss CIA views concerning Albania with Mr. Julius Holmes of the Department of State. The purpose of the meeting was to assist Mr. Holmes in the preparation of a State policy paper on the question of the detachment of Albania from the Soviet Orbit.

2. Mr. Holmes stated that his thought was tending toward a conclusion of the inadvisability of attempting at this time to undertake a program of detachment in view of the political factors and of the lack of U.S. covert assets. In response to his questions, the present state of CIA's program and assets was explained in general, including the number of agent penetrations made in the last year, the activities and composition of the National Committee for Free Albania, the PW operations (black radio and leaflet overflights) undertaken by CIA in the name of NCFL. CIA representatives were asked by Mr. Holmes to give their views of the future prospects for covert operations against Albania. (C) (J) C/SE, indicated that efforts would be continued to establish clandestine assets on a round basis but that the program faced great difficulties because of the isolation and backwardness of the target and the competition of the Soviet-directed Albanian security police.

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3. Mr. Holmes expressed interest in the names of well-known tribal leaders in exile with whom CIA maintains contact and implied that such contacts should be kept alive in the event of sudden developments requiring the rapid deployment of U.S. assets. The discussion also touched on the degree of CIA's supervision and control of the NCFA, now maintained through the chairman in New York and by occasional visits of an Athens case officer to Rome. It was agreed that this control should be tightened.

4. Mr. Holmes summed up his final conclusions by saying that he could see no justification for undertaking a program of detachment at this time but that he did feel plans and preparations should be made by the government agencies concerned to take advantage of any sudden favorable developments in Albania, such as the outbreak of a spontaneous revolt. He also thanked the CIA representatives for their help and indicated that his need for information on CIA views and capabilities had been fully met.

11 January 1955

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